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COMMITTEE ON RELATIONS WITH THE
HOST COUNTRY

Letter dated 6 November 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government, I wish to refer to a fresh violation by the United States Administration of its obligations pursuant to the host country agreement.

On 25 August 1998, the Permanent Mission of Iraq to the United Nations, following the customary procedures, approached the United States Mission to the United Nations with a view to obtaining a United States entry visa for Ambassador Muhammad Abdullah Al-Doory, Head of the Legal Department in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Iraq, in order that he might attend meetings of the fifty-third session of the General Assembly as a member of the Iraqi delegation. On 10 September 1998, the United States Mission informed the Permanent Mission of Iraq that the request had been approved, and gave the number of the telegram pursuant to which the visa would be granted by the Embassy of the United States in Amman. On this basis, Ambassador Al-Doory left Baghdad for Amman with a view to obtaining his entry visa. However, he was surprised to be told by the aforementioned Embassy that no entry visa had yet been granted to him. The Embassy asked him to answer a number of questions regarding the university of which he is a graduate, the names of his brothers and sisters, and other questions about his personal life. Ambassador Al-Doory waited in Amman for seven days for the entry visa. Meanwhile, the Permanent Mission of Iraq to the United Nations on more than one occasion raised the matter with the United States Mission, but to no avail. The Ambassador was therefore forced to return to Baghdad, and the Iraqi delegation was denied the contribution to the work of the fifty-third session of the General Assembly of one of its experts in international law. Furthermore, Ambassador Al-Doory was forced to undergo an exhausting return journey of more than 2,000 kilometres by land between Baghdad and Amman.

This is not the first recorded instance of such unjustified and discriminatory behaviour on the part of the United States Administration with regard to Iraqi delegations taking part in the work of the United Nations. The repetition of such behaviour raises questions as to the seriousness of that Administration's intentions with regard to the fulfilment of its obligations pursuant to the host country agreement, quite apart from its obligations under the rules of diplomacy and the principle of correct behaviour.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country.

Accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

(Signed) Nizar HAMDOON
Ambassador
Permanent Representative